

Fourth Sunday of Advent 2021

# THE JOURNEY ONWARDS ...

I come to do your will...



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## FROM THE READINGS

The Lord ... shall stand firm and shepherd his flock  
... He shall be peace. *Micah 5:4-5*

Behold, I come to do your will.” *Hebrews 10:7*

When Elizabeth heard Mary’s greeting, the infant leaped in her womb,  
and Elizabeth, filled with the Holy Spirit,  
cried out in a loud voice and said,  
“Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb.  
And how does this happen to me,  
that the mother of my Lord should come to me?  
For at the moment the sound of your greeting reached my ears,  
the infant in my womb leaped for joy.  
Blessed are you who believed  
that what was spoken to you by the Lord would be fulfilled.” *Luke 1:41-45*

## THE JOURNEY

According to Martin Sheen, whose character is a Camino de Santiago pilgrim in ‘The Way’, the movie offers ‘takeaways’ for families in these difficult times: “People are beginning to focus on, well, what is really important,” he says. “Families are starting to come together, starting to eat together. They’re not on the run all the time. There’s nowhere to run now. They’re forced to relate to one another; and they’re finding value in things that they’d overlooked because of this mass media and the hustle and bustle and anxiety of modern life. It’s taken its toll. And maybe there’s something going on, spiritually, that we had not anticipated. God works in very, very mysterious ways. Maybe something’s going on that is going to cause a rising in people that is going to be grace-filled for all of us.” (*Martin Sheen, Spiritual Revelations on The Way*).

In the readings for the Fourth Sunday of Advent 2021, there is a sense of

pausing, of family closeness, joyful recognition of God's mystery unfolding, and readiness to do God's will. Elizabeth, filled with delight and wonder, greets her young cousin, Mary, with prayers of welcome for the Child and blessing for the expectant mother.

### FROM FELLOW TRAVELLERS

**A moment paused above a quiet place,**  
and found, just this,  
a woman wrapped in silence,  
and the seed of silence was her heart that tried to give  
all that is held to give, and ever more” *John Lynch*

### **I sit by the stream in the forest.**

I sit in faith. I struggle in faith,  
to believe I am NOT idling my life away.  
I sit in faith, knowing that, sometime,  
something will come of this.  
I have nothing but faith to go by. *Edwina Gateley*

### FOR THINKING AND PRAYING

- What words or phrases stand out for you in these readings and insights of ‘fellow travellers’?
- What insights might you take with you on your own journey?



## A PRAYER

**Come, Advent God,**

your Church in the world needs saving  
from everything that threatens its mission.

Where it is persecuted, keep it faithful.

Where it persecutes, rebuke it.

Where it is seduced by power or by affluence, shake it to its foundations.

Where it is self-satisfied, thoroughly unsettle it.

Where it is distant and seen to be irrelevant,  
teach it to listen to your Spirit in the voices around it.

Where it is weak, poor, and meek, bless it with your joy, peace and strength.

At evening or midnight, morning or midday,

**Come, Lord Jesus.**

**Come, Advent God,**

and complete your work in Jesus Christ,  
through whom we offer our prayers.

Amen.

*Bruce Prewer*



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**Acknowledgements:** 'Spiritual Revelations on The Way', Martin Sheen at <https://www1.cbn.com/movies/emilio-estevez-and-martin-sheen-faith-the-way>; Excerpt from John Lynch, 'A Woman Wrapped in Silence' quoted in *My Journey, My Prayer*, Centre for Learning, Villa Maria Pennsylvania USA: 1977, 86; 'I sit by the stream...' Edwina Gateley, in 'Encountering God...the experience of the Mystics: Edwina Gateley in *Search and You Will Find: Prayers, Reflections and Readings*, Michael Brundell O'Carroll, Chris Christensen and Peter Gagen, Archdiocese of Brisbane Faith Education Services: 1998, 55; Prayer 'Come Advent God' Part II by Bruce Prewer, *Australian Prayers* 4th Edn, Westview: Kingston Springs USA:1983,2002, 38.